

Appln. Serial No. 09/557,530
Amendment Dated February 7, 2005
Reply to Office Action Mailed November 30, 2004

REMARKS

In the Office Action dated November 30, 2004, claims 1, 6, 8-11, 14, 29, and 37 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 over U.S. Patent No. 5,784,581 (Hannah); claims 27, 31, and 32-35 were rejected under § 103 over U.S. Patent No. 6,453,034 (Donovan); claims 16, 19-22, 28, and 36 were rejected under § 103 over Donovan in view of Hannah; and claim 12 was rejected under § 103 over Hannah in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,081,533 (Laubach).

Applicant acknowledges the allowance of claims 2, 4, 13, 18, and 23-25, and the indication that claims 3, 7, 17, 30, and 41 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Claims 1, 7, 16, 27-29, and 37 have been cancelled, by this Amendment, without prejudice to submission of these claims in a continuation application. Claims 3, 17, 30, and 41 have been rewritten in independent form, with their scope *unchanged*, to place them in condition for allowance.

In a telephonic interview on February 7, 2005, between the Examiner and the undersigned, the allowability of independent claim 32 was discussed. Specifically, the discussion focused on the similarity of the subject matter of claim 32 and some other allowed claims. The Examiner indicated that he will withdraw the final rejections of claims 32-36, and that he will allow claim 32 and its dependent claims 33-36.

Allowance of all claims is respectfully requested. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees and/or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 20-1504 (NRT.0042US).

Respectfully submitted,

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Dan C. Hu
Registration No. 40,025
TROP, PRUNER & HU, P.C.
8554 Katy Freeway, Suite 100
Houston, TX 77024
Telephone: (713) 468-8880
Facsimile: (713) 468-8883